

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

The Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) is a full-service state agency that assists veterans, their family members and survivors. The department is an advocate for veterans and their families, and aggressively pursues all federal and state benefits and entitlements on their behalf.

**Washington State Veterans
Toll-Free Phone Number
1-800-562-2308**

The department offers a complete referral service to provide veterans with accurate and current information on the entire range of veterans' benefits and entitlements. This service is available 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Messages may be left 24 hours a day.

In addition to its regular services, WDVA offers a wide variety of programs tailored to the specific needs of veterans and their family members.

(This pamphlet is available in alternate formats upon request.)

www.dva.wa.gov

1-800-562-2308

Veteran Benefits

The Washington Department of Veterans Affairs serves as an information resource for special programs, such as Agent Orange exposure, Persian Gulf Disease and Ionizing Radiation. The department tracks and monitors state and federal legislation and regulations which impact these special health care services and programs.

In addition, the department assists veterans in accessing the full range of federal VA benefits to which they may be entitled.

For information on these and other benefits available to Washington state veterans, contact WDVA.

Honorably discharged veterans who served in any branch of the armed forces *may* be eligible for the following state benefits:

Educational Benefits

County Veterans Assistance/Burial

Homeless Veteran Program

Employment Preference

Reemployment and Layoff Rights

Military Retirement Credit

Motor Vehicle License Plates

Reduced Fishing/Hunting License Fees

State and Federal Park Passes

Documents and Public Records

Reduced Public Transportation Fees

State Veterans Homes

Washington State Veterans Homes

The Washington Veterans Home at Retsil, the Washington Soldiers Home and Colony near Orting, and the Eastern Washington Veterans Home in Spokane provide high-quality, long-term skilled-nursing and assisted-living care for honorably discharged veterans.

Residents at each home receive comprehensive, no-cost medical benefits, prescription drug benefits and 24-hour nursing care.

Licensed medical staff, including registered nurses (RN), licensed practical nurses (LPN) and certified nursing assistants (CNA) provide personal care specifically tailored to each individual.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible for admission, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Served at any time, in any branch, of the United State Armed Forces;
- Received an honorable discharge;
- Reside in Washington state; and
- Meet certain financial guidelines

www.dva.wa.gov

1-800-562-2308

Federal Benefits for Families

Death Pension

Surviving spouses who have not remarried – as well as unmarried dependents of deceased veterans – may receive pension benefits if:

- The veteran served more than 90 days in active duty military service;
- Served at least one day during a period of wartime; and
- Received any discharge other than dishonorable.

Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC)

When a veteran dies of service-related causes – or was continuously rated totally disabled for at least 10 years preceding death, or five years from date of discharge – benefits may be paid to a surviving spouse, dependent or low-income parents.

Dependents must be:

- Less than 18 years of age,
- Not yet 23 years of age if attending a VA-approved school; or
- Disabled before age 18.

Burial Benefits

Benefits include the gravesite, headstone or marker, opening and closing of the grave and perpetual care.

The federal VA may pay reimbursement of a portion of the veteran's funeral and burial expenses, as well as provide headstones and markers for the unmarked graves of veterans anywhere. Eligible spouses and dependents may also qualify for headstones and markers in national, state veteran or military post cemeteries.

Qualifying veterans, service members, spouses and dependents may be eligible for burial in a VA National Cemetery.

Spina Bifida Allowance

Dependents of Vietnam veterans who suffer from Spina Bifida are eligible for vocational training, health care and a monthly allowance based on degree of disability.

Home Loan Guarantees

Spouses who have not remarried may qualify for a VA loan guarantee if they were married to:

- A veteran;
- A service member who died of service-related disabilities;
- A service member who died while on active duty; or
- A service member who has been listed as MIA or a POW for more than 90 days.

Educational Assistance

Based on the veteran's length and degree of service-related disability, or other qualifying factors for service members, educational benefits may be available to dependents and spouses who have not remarried.

Dependents must be between the ages of 18 and 26 to receive education benefits, though extensions may be granted.

Veterans Assistance Fund

Indigent families of deceased wartime veterans – who have resided in Washington state for at least one year – may be eligible for county aid through the Veterans Assistance Fund.

Employment Preference

Surviving spouses of honorably discharged wartime veterans – and spouses of honorably discharged veterans with a permanent and total service-connected disability – are eligible for preference for public employment.

Veterans Estate Management Program

The Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) Veterans Estate Management Program offers protective payee services for veterans and family members who are incapable of managing their own financial affairs. By assuming custody of the individual's finances, the department ensures basic needs – such as housing, food, clothing and medical care – are provided.

The WDVA director is authorized to provide protective financial services to veterans and beneficiaries deemed in need of assistance. These services may include the following:

- ◆ Fiduciary appointment by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs;
- ◆ Representative payee appointment by the Social Security Administration; or
- ◆ Act as an executor of a veteran's estate.

Mission:

- ◆ To provide timely payments to clients and vendors to ensure food, clothing and shelter needs are met using the client's limited income and resources;
- ◆ To protect client income and assets from undue creditor claims, as well as protection from loss or diversion;
- ◆ To ensure all clients are fully advised of all potential federal and state benefits to which they may be entitled; and
- ◆ To provide maximum investment and savings opportunities.

WDVA's Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project

HVRP - serving Seattle and the Puget Sound Region - is a proven, successful program which gets homeless veterans off the street and back to being productive members of society.

The HVRP offers a structured, individually designed case management plan to make veterans employable and secure by providing, housing, food, transportation, security and employment support services.

Through outreach, assessments and enrollment into program services, veterans gain employability development to become job ready.

Washington State's Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Counseling Program

Since 1984, the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs has maintained a one-of-a-kind, state-funded outreach/counseling program designed to provide confidential counseling services to more than 70,000 Washington state veterans with war-era and PTSD-related problems.

Currently, the state contracts with 25 specialized counselors to help veterans resolve their war-related PTSD readjustment issues.

All honorably discharged wartime veterans and family members-including veterans from WWII, Korea, and the various recent periods of conflict and peace-keeping operations-are eligible for counseling.

1-800-562-2308